

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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FM AMCONGEN OSAKA KOBE JAPAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1842

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT/JA

SUBJECT: RESULTS OF ELECTIONS IN CENTRAL JAPAN

REFS: A. OSAKA-KOBE 2410 TO TOKYO

B. OSAKA-KOBE A-007, FEB 28

1. SUMMARY: JCP-BACKED KURODA WAS REELECTED GOVERNOR OF OSAKA. VICTORY ATTRIBUTED TO GOOD CAMPAIGNING BUT PRINCIPALLY TO INCUMBENCY VOTE. EARLY SIGNS POINT TO NEW TERM BESET WITH CONTROVERSY AND POLITICAL CONFLICTS. AICHI (NAGOYA) TURNED IN SOLID LDP WIN. IN REMAINING PREFECTURES OF CONSULAR DISTRICT CONSERVATIVE NATURES OF GOVERNMENTS WERE MAINTAINED WITH LDP LEGISLATURE SEAT LOSSES BALANCED BY INCREASES IN CONSERVATIVE INDEPENDENTS. KOMEITO'S SUBSTANTIAL GAINS IN LEGISLATURES WERE RESULT OF SKILLFUL CAMPAIGNING. COMPOSITE SCORE FOR LEFTISTS SHOWED JSP DOWN, JCP DOWN SLIGHTLY, AND DSP NO CHANGE. END SUMMARY.

2. OSAKA GOVERNOR'S CONTEST SHARED WITH TOKYO MUCH OF LIMELIGHT OF APRIL 13 ELECTIONS. VICTORY OF INCUMBENT GOVERNOR KURODA

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WAS SIGNIFICANT PRINCIPALLY BECAUSE HE WAS BACKED BY JCP ONLY

AND IT WAS FIRST TIME THAT CANDIDATE WITH SOLE SUPPORT OF COMMUNISTS HAS WON GOVERNOR'S ELECTION IN JAPAN. KURODA'S TOTAL VOTES OF 1,494,000 OVER RUNNER-UP YUKAWA'S (LDP) 1,043,000 AND THIRD PLACER TAKEUCHI'S (DSP, JSP, KOMEITO) 949,000 WAS CLEAR-CUT WIN. ABOUT 700,000 OF KURODA'S TOTAL VOTE REPRESENTED COMMUNISTS AND COMMUNIST SYMPATHIZERS. THE REMAINING 700,000 VOTES HE RECEIVED WERE FROM LEFTISTS AND OTHERS WHO APPROVED OR WERE BENEFITTED BY HIS ACTIONS AS GOVERNOR DURING PRECEDING FOUR YEAR TERM. THIS BLOCK OF VOTES IS REGARDED AS "INCUMBENCY VOTE" AND WAS A DECISIVE FACTOR IN KURODA'S WIN.

3. KURODA PUBLICALLY STATED AFTER HIS REELECTION THAT HE WOULD GOVERN AS "REPRESENTATIVE OF PREFECTURAL PEOPLES PARTY" I.E., HE WOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO JCP ONLY. PRESS HAS WARNED THAT HE MUST REMAIN TRUE TO THIS PROMISE OTHERWISE HE WILL BE REJECTED BY VOTERS.

4. CONGEN BELIEVES THAT REGARDLESS OF KURODA'S SINCERITY OR SUCCESS IN TRYING TO FOLLOW A NOT NECESSARILY COMMUNIST LINE, HE IS INDELIBLY MARKED AS A JCP MAN BECAUSE HE ACCEPTED ITS SOLE SUPPORT FOR HIS REELECTION. HE WILL THEREFORE BE HANDLED VERY ROUGHLY BY CONSERVATIVE AS WELL AS LEFTIST POLITICAL FORCES IN OSAKA PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY WHERE JCP NOW HAS 17 OUT OF TOTAL 112 SEATS. BUFFETING HAS ALREADY BEGUN. KURODA'S TWO VICE GOVERNORS AND TREASURER IN RECENTLY ENDED ADMINISTRATION HAVE TENDERED RESIGNATIONS. THEY DIFFERED WITH KURODA ON SEVERAL LOCAL ISSUES. MOREOVER ONE OF VICE GOVERNORS, SUPPORTING JSP POLICY, OPPOSED KURODA ON DOWA PROBLEM. BUSINESS LEADERSHIP OF OSAKA WAS SHOCKED BY KURODA REELECTION AND ANTICIPATES THAT FORTHCOMING ADMINISTRATION'S EMPHASIS ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT WILL HAVE RESTRICTIVE EFFECT ON INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPANSION. BRIEFLY, KURODA'S NEW ADMINISTRATION SEEMS BESET WITH CONTROVERSY AND CONFLICTING POLITICAL PRESSURES WHICH WILL PROBABLY PRECLUDE A SUCCESSFUL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM AND ANY SIGNIFICANT DIRECTION OF POLICY TOWARD THE LEFT OR THE RIGHT.

5. IN OSAKA PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION LDP GAINED 5 SEATS FOR TOTAL 38 IN THE 112 SEAT LEGISLATURE. KOMEITO WHICH GAINED 7 SEATS NOW HAS TOTAL 19 AND REPLACED JSP AS SECOND STRONGEST PARTY IN ASSEMBLY. JSP LOST 4. DSP LOST 3. JCP LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GAINED 2. KOMEITO GAIN BALANCES JSP AND DSP LOSSES. LDP OUT-GAINED JCP BY 2. THEREFORE NEW ASSEMBLY REPRESENTS VERY SLIGHT VICTORY FOR CONSERVATIVES.

6. IN AICHI PREFECTURE (NAGOYA) LDP INCREASED ITS SEATS FROM 62 TO 66, THUS REINFORCING ITS COMMAND OVER 106 SEAT ASSEMBLY. KOMEITO ALSO GAINED 4 SEATS TO CURRENT TOTAL 6. JSP LOST 4. DSP LOST 3. JCP LOST 2 AND NOW HAS NONE. SOLID CONSERVATIVE

VICTORY IN AICHI IYKKGHARDED AS VOTER APPROVAL OF POLITICALLY BROADMINDED ATTITUDES AND SUCCESSFUL FIRST TWO MONTHS OF NEW LDP-SUPPORTED GOVERNOR NAKAYA (REF B.).

7. IN OTHER PREFECTURES WAKAYAMA MAINTAINED STRONG CONSERVATIVE CHARACTER WITH REELECTION OF LDP GOVERNOR AND ELECTION 24 ASSEMBLY MEMBERS WHO CONTINUE TO CONTROL TOTAL 46 SEAT LEGISLATURE. ROUGHLY SAME SITUATION RESULTED IN FUKUI.H ALTHOUGH LDP THERE LOST 8 SEATS ITS 22 MEMBERS STILL CONTROL TOTAL 40 SEAT LEGISLATURE. IN SHIMANE LDP-LINERS TOOK DRUBBING FROM CONSERVATIVE INDEPENDENTS WHO ELECTED GOVERNOR AND 27 OUT OF TOTAL 41 SEAT LEGISLATURE. IN OTHER PREFECTURES NEW ASSEMBLIES RETAINED THEIR CONSERVATIVE NATURES, WITH LDP LOSSES BALANCED BY ELECTIONS OF CONSERVATIVE INCLINED INDEPENDENTS.

8. COMPOSITE RESULTS OF ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN TOTAL 20 PREFECTURES OF THIS CONSULAR DISTRICT SHOWED LDP LOSS OF 83 SEATS, BUT THIS WAS BALANCED BY GAIN OF 118 CONSERVATIVE INDEPENDENTS. JSP LOST 14. DSP REMAINED AT SAME LEVEL. JCP LOST 4. KOMEITO GAINED 33.

9. KOMEITO SUCCESS IS ATTRIBUTED TO MORE ACTIVE AND PERSONALIZED CAMPAIGNING AND ATTEMTION TO NON-PARTY VOTERS AND MINORITY GROUPS. MOREOVER, KOMEITO DID NOT RUN ITS OWN CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR IN THE FOUR PREFECTURES WHERE GUBERNATORIAL ELECTIONS WERE HELD CONCURRENTLY WITH ASSEMBLY CONTESTS. THUS KOMEITO WAS ABLE TO CONCENTRATE ON IMPROVING REPRESENTATION IN LEGISLATURES. KOMEITO GAINS WERE IN PREFECTURES HAVING LARGE URBAN CENTERS. IN RURAL AREAS IT MAINTAINED ABOUT SAME LOW LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION IN LEGISLATURES. BRUNS

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